


**Date:** Sept.21, 2006

**Index Title:** Statutory changes in the admissions  
and treatment rights of minors

To: Listserv

For: Area Administrators/Human Services Area Coordinators  
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Disability Rights Wisconsin

From:  Sinikka Santala  
Administrator

Subject: Statutory changes in the admissions and treatment rights of minors

### Document Summary

The Legislature recently amended the rights of minors in regards to their admission and treatment for mental health, developmental disabilities or substance abuse. This memo announces the creation of a new section of the Client Rights Internet Site devoted to the rights of minors.

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The changes made in the admission and treatment rights of minors by 2005 Wisconsin Act 444 went into effect on August 1, 2006. The act is found at: <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/2005/data/acts/05Act444.pdf>

One major change in those rights is that now the custodial parent or guardian of a minor age 14 and older can admit the minor for treatment over the minor's objection. The minor's objection to the admission triggers an automatic court review of the admission. Under the old law, the admission could take place only with the minor's written agreement.

A new section has been added to the Client Rights Internet site to cover the issues regarding admissions and treatment of minors. There are documents on that site setting forth the provisions of the amended laws in a user-friendly manner. Minors must also be informed of their rights, so there is a pamphlet on that site allowing service providers to provide the correct information to minors they serve. There are also some Client Rights materials on the role of a parent or guardian in the treatment of minors.

The site is located at: <http://dhfs.wisconsin.gov/clientrights/minors.htm>

The materials available on that site should be helpful to minors, their parents and guardians, and the providers who serve them.

Another major change in the rights of minors is that the courts with jurisdiction over juveniles per chapters 48 and 938 must appoint a Mental Health Review Officer (MHRO) to review the outpatient mental health treatment of minors aged 14 and older. The department is required to maintain a list of the MHROs on its Internet site.

The MHRO site is at: <http://dhfs.wisconsin.gov/clientrights/minors/MHRO.htm>

Juvenile Court officials are directed via that site how to submit the names and contact information for the Mental Health Review Officers they appoint.

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MEMO WEB SITE: [http://dhfs.wisconsin.gov/dsl\\_info/](http://dhfs.wisconsin.gov/dsl_info/)